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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE WORLD SOCIAL SITUATION AND TO YOUTH, AGEING, DISABLED PERSONS AND THE FAMILY

Note by the Secretariat

In its resolution 1991/10 of 30 May 1991, the Economic and Social Council recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of the International Plan of Action on Ageing and related activities

The General Assembly,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/50 of 24 May 1989, in which the Council endorsed a draft programme of United Nations activities relating to the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, in 1992,

Pursuant to its resolution 45/106 of 14 December 1990, in which it endorsed the action programme on ageing for 1992 and beyond as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on the question of ageing, 1/ invited Member States, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to consider innovative and effective ways of cooperating on the selection of targets in the field of ageing during 1991 and 1992, and urged Member States, the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

1/ A/45/420.

and non-governmental organizations concerned to participate in the action programme on ageing for 1992 and beyond, especially in selecting targets in the field of ageing, in organizing community-wide activities and in launching an information and fund-raising campaign to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing at the local, national, regional and global levels,

Recalling that in resolution 45/106 it endorsed the convening of an ad hoc working group of the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-second session to monitor the activities for the tenth anniversary, especially the launching of a global information campaign, and the selection of targets that might form the basis of the third review and appraisal of the Plan of Action to be made by the Commission at its thirty-third session, in 1993, and recommended that the Commission give consideration to the desirability of convening, subject to the availability of funds, regional and sectoral meetings on the selection of targets on ageing during 1991 and 1992 and global consultations in 1993 and 1997,

Also recalling that, in resolution 45/106, it recognized the complexity and rapidity of the ageing of the world's population and the need to have a common basis and frame of reference for the protection and promotion of the rights of the elderly, including the contribution that the elderly can and should make to society,

Aware of the plight of the elderly in developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, as well as those in difficult circumstances, such as refugees, migrant workers and victims of conflict,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1751 (LIV) of 16 May 1973 on the aged and social security,

1. Recommends that the United Nations define, on the basis of the recommendations of a small expert group meeting to be held in 1991 within existing resources, targets on ageing to provide a pragmatic focus for the broad and ideal goals of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, and issue them as "Targets on ageing: programme recommendations at the national level for the year 2001";

2. Urges Member States to identify their specific national targets on ageing for the year 2001, on the basis of the proposed targets on ageing;

3. Invites the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to develop, in consultation with United Nations organizations and bodies and international non-governmental organizations, a set of suggested global targets designed to support implementation of the national targets on ageing;

4. Recommends that the General Assembly devote four plenary meetings, that is, two working days, at its forty-seventh session to an international conference on ageing to consolidate a set of targets on ageing for the year

2001 and to celebrate on an appropriate global scale the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing;

5. Urges the United Nations to give special attention to implementing the action programme on ageing for 1992 and beyond;

6. Calls upon the Secretary-General to give all possible support, in the form of both regular and extrabudgetary resources, to the Ageing Unit of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, to enable it to fulfil its mandate as lead agency for the action programme on ageing;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to designate the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna as coordinator for the preparation of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing and for the implementation of the action programme on ageing for 1992 and beyond;

8. Invites the Secretary-General to explore the feasibility of appointing an interregional adviser on ageing to assist developing countries in expanding their ability to respond effectively to the ageing of their populations;

9. Invites the United Nations to examine the feasibility of launching a service composed of experts who are elderly, modelled on the United Nations Volunteers;

10. Urges the United Nations Postal Administration, as called upon in General Assembly resolution 44/67 of 8 December 1989, to issue a stamp to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the International Plan of Action on Ageing;

11. Urges the United Nations to consider, on an exceptional basis, issuing a medal on ageing bearing the emblem of the World Assembly on Ageing to mark activities planned for the decade 1992-2001;

12. Decides to launch a global information campaign on the action programme on ageing for 1992 and beyond, and welcomes the cooperation of the Department of Public Information and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat and other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in this endeavour;

13. Recommends that the United Nations provide further advisory services to countries in the process of development, change and transition, at their request, to ensure that the issue of ageing remains an important part of their social development programmes;

14. Adopts the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, based on the International Plan of Action on Ageing, annexed to the present resolution.

Annex

UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES FOR OLDER PERSONS 2/

To add life to the years that have been added to life

The General Assembly,

Appreciating the contribution that older persons make to their societies,

Recognizing that, in the Charter of the United Nations, the peoples of the United Nations declare, inter alia, their determination to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Noting the elaboration of those rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 3/ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 4/ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 4/ and other declarations to ensure the application of universal standards to particular groups,

In pursuance of the International Plan of Action on Ageing, adopted by the World Assembly on Ageing and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/51 of 3 December 1982,

Appreciating the tremendous diversity in the situation of older persons, not only between countries but within countries and between individuals, which requires a variety of policy responses,

Aware that in all countries, individuals are reaching an advanced age in greater numbers and in better health than ever before,

Aware of the scientific research disproving many stereotypes about inevitable and irreversible declines with age,

Convinced that in a world characterized by an increasing number and proportion of older persons, opportunities must be provided for willing and capable older persons to participate in and contribute to the ongoing activities of society,

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2/ Based on the International Plan of Action on Ageing; see Report of the World Assembly on Ageing, Vienna, 26 July-6 August 1982 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16), chap. VI, sect. A.

3/ Resolution 217 A (III).

4/ Resolution 2200 A (XXI).

Mindful that the strains on family life in both developed and developing countries require support for those providing care to frail older persons,

Bearing in mind the standards already set by the International Plan of Action on Ageing and the conventions, recommendations and resolutions of the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organization and other United Nations entities,

Encourages Governments to incorporate the following principles into their national programmes whenever possible:

Independence

1. Older persons should have access to adequate food, water, shelter, clothing and health care through the provision of income, family and community support and self-help.

2. Older persons should have the opportunity to work or to have access to other income-generating opportunities.

3. Older persons should be able to participate in determining when and at what pace withdrawal from the labour force takes place.

4. Older persons should have access to appropriate educational and training programmes.

5. Older persons should be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities.

6. Older persons should be able to reside at home for as long as possible.

Participation

7. Older persons should remain integrated in society, participate actively in the formulation and implementation of policies that directly affect their well-being and share their knowledge and skills with younger generations.

8. Older persons should be able to seek and develop opportunities for service to the community and to serve as volunteers in positions appropriate to their interests and capabilities.

9. Older persons should be able to form movements or associations of older persons.

Care

10. Older persons should benefit from family and community care and protection in accordance with each society's system of cultural values.

11. Older persons should have access to health care to help them to maintain or regain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well-being and to prevent or delay the onset of illness.

12. Older persons should have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection and care.

13. Older persons should be able to utilize appropriate levels of institutional care providing protection, rehabilitation and social and mental stimulation in a humane and secure environment.

14. Older persons should be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in any shelter, care or treatment facility, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy and for the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives.

Self-fulfilment

15. Older persons should be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential.

16. Older persons should have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society.

Dignity

17. Older persons should be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse.

18. Older persons should be treated fairly regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution.